

INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY STAFF

4 June 1976

Executive Registry


76-9488

NOTE FOR MR. BUSH

Sir:

We plan to pass the attached questions to the Arends Panel as the kinds of questions which his Panel might address and provide you advice. OLC has helped us in drafting the questions. We think it best that an official memorandum transmitting the questions not be prepared.

STATINTL

  
John N. McMahon  
AD/DCI/IC

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE *IC*)

INFORMATION

1. What should be our primary areas of focus in the interest of improving Intelligence Community relationships with the Hill?

2. In light of the fact that there presently are seven committees in Congress to whom I report sensitive covert actions and their membership, excluding staff, totals 58:

a. What action can be taken to concentrate oversight to prevent leakage of sensitive information?

b. What action should be considered by the Executive Branch with respect to the Rules of the House of Representatives which permit every member of the House to have access to the records of any committee.

c. In view of the assertion by at least the Committee of the Senate on Intelligence to be kept fully and currently informed with respect to intelligence activities including significant anticipated activities, what lines should be drawn to preserve the integrity of the decision-making process within the Executive Branch and that of the President.

d. Do the times require that we be completely responsive to the requests of information by any committee? If not, on what kinds of matters should we stand fast?

3. How can we best encourage the new Senate Committee on Intelligence and other oversight committees to serve as a buffer against a proliferation of inquiries from subcommittees with responsibilities only marginally related to intelligence?

4. What should be our policy with respect to providing unclassified information to Congress, its committees and members, and providing sanitized versions of classified testimony or documents. Does the Agency or the Intelligence Community have a responsibility to contribute to informed public opinion in light of the practical problem that this often enmeshes the Agency in controversial policy matters?

5. What should be the position of the Agency in the face of an assertion of a congressional right to disclose classified and intelligence sources and methods information by:

a. The action of only one House of the Congress;

b. The action by a committee of the Congress.

6. What mechanism would you propose for members of the oversight committees for registering responsibly their opposition to a covert action reported to them.

7. What arguments should we stress in our efforts to preserve the option of covert action in the face of legislative initiatives to proscribe such programs? What specific types of covert actions do you believe could be proscribed, e.g., paramilitary activities without adversely affecting the options and authority of the President in the conduct of foreign relations?

8. What arguments should we stress in our efforts to keep the intelligence budget classified?

9. What can I do to enhance appreciation on the part of members of the Congress as to the need to protect the classification of sensitive intelligence information?

10. Could anything be done to assure that there are uniform standards for clearing congressional staff personnel members before they are allowed access to classified intelligence material and to have them execute an enforceable secrecy agreement?